

Throw-wax (*Bupleurum rotundifolium*), so called from the stalk growing through or thorow the leaf, wax being the old word for "grow."

We also found a luxuriant variety of Cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*), Kent and Hampshire being its only home in Britain.

Fresh finds in August numbered but 94, amongst them being Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) and Great Dodder (*Cuscuta europaea*), a twining parasitical plant of greenish yellow.

In September the number of fresh specimens dropped to 35; one purplish-red flower growing in a marsh we think must be Water Germander (*Teucrium scordium*), but Bentham says it is rare, and we should like to know if anyone else has found it.

Of sixteen species of Speedwell, ten grow profusely in this district, as do the five Stachys, including the true Woundwort. On the other hand, we are still looking for Field Scabious, Burnets, and Clematis; field Poppies are not at all common, and the first piece of Toadflax was not found till September 4th.

During the winter we hope to be able to classify our "finds" according to their orders, so that we may further realise their connection one with another.

M. E. DAVIS.

WALKING IN SWITZERLAND.

We left Charing Cross at 2.15 and in due course, considering that we were travelling on the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, we got to Folkestone. We were taking only such things as we could each carry in a knapsack, or rather "rucksack," which is its proper name, so that we had no baggage to register or trouble about. Never again will I go for a tour with anything but a rucksack. They make very little difference when walking, and the trouble and bother saved in transport is not to be reckoned. The weather was very kind to us, and we got safely through the trial of crossing with no mishap, and so came to the land of France—Boulogne, to be accurate—where of course the first thing we saw was a little man in blue coat and greasy scarlet trousers. They call them soldiers over there. Naturally the first thing when we had found our four reserved corner seats in the train to Bâle was tea, and not caring to test the obnoxious mixture that passes for such in France, we sent our brother waving a new bright tin kettle about the station shouting, "*Eau bouillante?*" I don't know if he knew what it meant, but as he came back with some hot water someone must have taken pity on him. We were left in sole possession of our carriage, possibly because of the culinary operations going on inside. We had quite a pleasant journey through to Bâle, the only noteworthy facts being the flatness of the country, the treelessness and lack of completeness in the morn (quotation of a fellow-passenger), the vast number of calls upon our "billets," and the total disappearance of a pair of spectacles. No one knows where these last went to, and I suppose never will.

We went south by way of Laon, Rheims, Chalons, etc. At

L'UMILE PIANTA

12

Quatre Bras or some such place we drank hot coffee out of wine-glasses—the custom, I suppose. At the next station, some fifty miles on, my brother announced that his opinion of continental trains had gone up, as we had done the distance in something like $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. When he found that it was now Swiss time, one hour earlier than the French, his disgust is better imagined than described. At Bâle we had to go through the Customs, and here the great advantage of knapsacks came in, for all we had to do was to rush to the Zollverein, or whatever it is, say "Nichts gar nichts," and rush off and get the best seats in the train for Lucerne. We left Bâle at about seven o'clock on Sunday morning, and got to Lucerne at about 9.30, where the first thing we saw was a Sunlight Soap advertisement. As we had got rooms in advance, we went straight to our hotel, had something to eat, and went to bed; but about three o'clock, with praiseworthy energy, we got up, not to go to church—no English person thinks there is a recording angel on the Continent, and leaves his principles behind him on the boat, and some leave their manners, too; though talking of manners, my brother says he has had greater courtesy from a Bank Holiday Hampstead Heath crowd than from a crowd of foreigners. During the time we were in Switzerland I never once saw a man give up his seat to a lady, the nearest approach being a fat priest giving up his seat to a fellow priest. We got up to go on an expedition towards Immensee, to see one of Tell's Chapels. We went by boat to Rüssnacht, a small place at the foot of the Rigi, on the shore of one of the northern arms of the Lake of Lucerne. The town of Lucerne looks beautiful from the lake. Rüssnacht has some very pretty châlets. The walk to Tell's Chapel lies along the road to Immensee, and it was inches deep in dust, and we got grey with it. A part of the two miles to the Chapel runs through a beautiful avenue of chestnut trees, and we were glad of the shade. As for the Chapel itself, it is but a square building dedicated to the mythical hero William Tell (Baedeker says he was only a

myth). This particular chapel is supposed to mark the place where he killed, or rather murdered, Gessler. There is another chapel dedicated to him on the shore of a southern arm of the Lake which marks the place where he landed when being taken a prisoner by Gessler to Rüssnacht. In the chapel we visited there were two large frescoes on the walls representing the murder of Gessler and the rescue of a child by Tell from a flooded river, when he is supposed to have lost his life. A few yards further on lay Immen, some hundreds of feet below, on the shore of Lake Zug. We sat down in the hedge and ate our lunch and watched the changing colours of the Lake. We walked back to Rüssnacht and took train to Lucerne.

On Monday morning we started for the ascent of the Rigi, intending to go up by train and walk down. We went by boat to Vitzau, one of the places the Rigi Bahn starts from. We had a grand view of the Lake as we were going up, but all the snow peaks were covered with clouds. We walked the last part. The top itself might be taken for Blackpool: stalls with various things charged for in proportion to the height above sea-level, crowds of people and big hotels. But the view the other side is lovely. A sheer drop of 4,000 feet to Immensee and a fine view over Lucerne and Zug, but we couldn't see Geneva. All that valley was simply beautifully clear and in sunshine. We did just catch sight of our first snow through lifts in the clouds. We walked down to Weggis. When we got to the bottom we one and all vowed that in future we would walk up a mountain and come down by train. Credit always appears to be given to a person who climbs up, but it is a great mistake, it is ever so much harder work to climb down. Our knees were shaking so, we could hardly walk when we found ourselves safely at Weggis. Weren't we glad to scramble on the boat for Lucerne!

After making ourselves respectable, we still had a few minutes to spare, so we rushed off to see the famous lion of Lucerne. It is a beautiful piece of work, carved out of

the solid rock, and has appropriately gloomy surroundings, overhanging trees and a still pond at its foot. It is in memory of the Royal Swiss Guards; but you all know about it, I'm sure. I have never seen a model that gives quite the same expression of pain and despair that is on the face of the original.

We rushed back to dinner. I do not think any of us are particularly greedy, but we all did look forward to those hotel dinners, not so much for the things to eat—though after a hard day's work with little or no lunch they were acceptable enough—but for the peculiar people and their more peculiar manners, or lack of them, whom we would watch and try to guess their nationality. The chief nations are easy to distinguish. Englishmen by their clothes, French by their energy and great talking capacity, and the Germans, who spare no time to talk but spend their energies in eating.

On Tuesday we started properly on our "walking" tour by taking boat to Flüellen, a small place at the extreme southern end of the Lake. We went through the narrow neck of the Lake where from a distance the two banks appear to meet, Rigi on our right and rugged Pilatus at our backs. From Flüellen we trained to Amsteg. We passed Altdorf, where every four years they hold a national play, Tell, of course, being the hero, and all parts are played by peasants. I wish we could have seen one. The railway we left at Amsteg is the one that runs through the St. Gothard Tunnel into Italy. It is quite wonderful. It is an ordinary track, and so has to twist and turn through circular tunnels like a cork screw to get up the 2,500 feet from Flüellen to the St. Gothard Tunnel. Our destination was Göschenen. We shouldered our knapsacks at Amsteg for the first time. At the end of about two miles we didn't feel them, yet they must have weighed quite 12 lbs. each. The straps fit so comfortably over each shoulder. The walk was a lovely one through beautiful woods, and as the sun was just boiling we were awfully glad of the shade, also of the many springs we passed, though we found from

the start what a mistake it was to drink when we were thirsty. I generally carried a pebble in my mouth. It was a steady ascent all the way to Göschenen. We were glad to sit down on the roadside and make tea at Wasen. I don't know what we should have done without our kettle and spirit lamp. The handle of the kettle came through the lid of a box by which we carried it. A bend in the road found us at Göschenen.

On Wednesday we started for a climb towards the Dammagletcher. The first part was very pretty and wooded, and multitudes of huge bilberries growing everywhere; but higher up the path became more rugged, rocky, and steep. After some three hours' stiff work we were disappointed of the snow we hoped to have touched. We saw some coming back, about a half-hour climb above us. My mother went up and fetched a handful. We had heard in England of a beautiful waterfall at Göschenen. We couldn't find it anywhere. When we asked we were told it could only be seen at real risk to life and limb, so we had to be content with a p.c., which at least we could have with safety. In the cemetery is a small marble monument to Fabre, the designer of the St. Gothard Tunnel. He has left a legacy to Göschenen beyond the monument, in the incessant rumble of the works which ventilate the tunnel, heard all over Göschenen, and especially at our hotel.

On Thursday we made a late start, and it was necessary to have fresh soles on to our boots, though the Swiss leather is not to be spoken of in the same breath with brown paper; still, it furnishes a hold for plenty of iron nails, which take the wear. It was terribly hot when we started on the ten mile lap to Realp, at the bottom of the Furka pass. We followed the road over the St. Gothard. It was very dusty, and much used and steep in places. We were high above the river Reuss; parts of the road are cut in solid rock. About one mile from Göschenen is a cross cut in the rock to the memory of the Russians who fell in 1799. A bit further on we crossed the river by a bridge just under a waterfall. The sun made gorgeous colours on the spray. The first bridge

L'UMILE PIANTA

16

built here and the one now there, are called the Devil's Bridge. You know the legend about it. The devil helped in the building on condition that he had the first thing that came over, and high up on the rocks is a painting showing the builder on one side driving a dog or goat and the devil waiting on the other side. Just above the bridge the road goes through a tunnel 180 feet long; at both ends there are huge iron doors which can be shut for military reasons. This is the frontier, so an important military post. We saw several soldiers, all dirty, small-looking creatures. Just past Hospenthal we sat by a stream in a pine wood and had lunch—a small roll and a bit of chocolate and some fruit, and water as much as we liked to drink; we did leave a little for other people. The last four miles to Realp was dull and dusty. Here we found we had the choice of two inns, one dear and more or less clean, the other far from savoury; so we spared our olfactory nerves at the expense of our pockets. Here we had a thoroughly German dinner, which consisted of the most part of ham and eggs. Here too we first saw a toast drunk in the German way, which seems to need some lightness of hand to carry through without upsetting the wine over the other man's legs and on to the table-cloth. The next day we went over the Furka, about sixteen miles' walk, including the climb up and down. The "posts" go over here; they are Government-owned carriages which carry passengers really at very moderate charges, and they are quite comfy. We went on to the Rhone glacier. On our way we had our first drop of rain, but it soon cleared off, for which we were thankful, for a more lovely sight than the Rhone glacier from above with the sun on it you really cannot imagine. Oh, it was too beautiful! The deep blue of the crevasses and the white tops of the little ice peaks was lovely. The postcards do not exaggerate a bit. We climbed down on to the ice and wandered about for a bit, but I was afraid something would give way and down we should go. Then we went in the grotto which is cut in the side of the glacier. It was so cold

inside, and wonderful brilliant blue lights come through the ice and have the funny effect of making everything look rosy when you come out. We stayed at the Hotel du Glacier du Rhône, which, with its dependence, constitutes the village of Gletch. We saw some very funny people here, especially Americans, who could be heard all over the hotel—oh, such fat, ungainly-looking boys and a *huge* and prosperous-looking mother. There were heaps of people here, and you should have seen the exceedingly rapid manner in which the waiter ladled out soup. I was so interested in watching I forgot to have my own. This hotel is about three miles from the bottom of the glacier, from which rushes the little Rhone river.

The weather began to break here, and it was cold; we had a huge log fire in the hall of the hotel, round which everyone tried to get. The next morning it was worse, but we had decided to "post" down to Fiesch, so it did not matter to us. However well the "post" goes up hill and along the level, coming down a pass it is quite the reverse of pleasant; for of course the road zigzags with sharp corners so as to avoid steepness, and the drivers come down with a rush, skim round the corners on two wheels of the carriage, and go tearing on. Several times we clutched on to each other and really thought we were over; the fact that the driver had in all probability been playing this game twice a day for the last five years did not make us feel any less sure that this time he would break his neck and ours. It did not last long—only about five miles out of the eighteen or nineteen. We got along beautifully, following the Rhone, and passed through several picturesque villages. All Swiss villages are picturesque to us, accustomed to red brick villas and corrugated iron roofs. It cleared up by the time we reached Fiesch.

Next morning, Sunday, a week since we reached Lucerne, we were up early and started to climb the Eggishorn in lovely weather. Two of us did not go so far, so the other two told us about it. It was the hardest climb they had had, through

woods, open fields, and over broken rocks the last half-hour. About 1,000 feet up they got into mist and gave up hope of a view at the top. Half-way up is the irrepressible hotel. Wherever there is a flat rock, there the Swiss build a hotel. This one is kept going solely by English people. There were thirty people there, all English. The last part of the climb was awful, scrambling over rocks, slipping over loose stones, etc., but they said it was well worth it, so truly wonderful and beautiful was the view. No mist the other side of the mountain. A sheer drop of 2,000 feet with nothing between them but air, because they found themselves on an overhanging ledge of rock. The great Aletsch glacier, a river of ice thirty miles long—just think of it! Away on the right was the huge mass of the Jungfrau, absolutely pure white, joined by a high ridge to the Mörich, almost as white. It was a magnificent view, not spoilt by hotel or railway or anything. Not a sound to be heard but the occasional cow bell on some distant hill. They sat up there for an hour, 10,000 feet above the sea and 7,000 feet above Fiesch. 7,000 feet is no joke, I assure you, to climb. They passed several people going up, many of whom turned back three-quarters of an hour from the top, either dispairing of a view or too tired to attempt the last piece. There were three men they passed going up who stopped every five minutes to drink and sing as they were coming down. They met them again; they asked if there was anything to be seen from the top! They told them it was lovely; they were within forty minutes of the top. "Oh, impossible to be a view," they said, "and moreover, our bottles are empty"; whereupon they displayed eight empty bottles! They turned back, can you believe it, and followed us home; yet they were armed with ice axes and all correct paraphernalia. We took a short cut towards the end and found heaps and heaps of wild strawberries and raspberries; the short cut was so steep that we landed with no skin on our toes and no strength in our knees.

A. J. R.

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Bulmei Rectory, York.

September 30th.

DEAR EDITOR,—I am writing just to let you know, to note it in "L'UMILE PIANTA," that I have received £2 in all for the Scale How Mission Fund, and have to-day sent £1 each to the Misses Conder and Smyth. I have been hoping that more would come in, but could wait no longer, as Miss Smyth starts for Uganda in a day or two. I received one subscription this morning; but only three have come in answer to the appeal, the rest I collected at the Conference.—Believe me, Ever yours most sincerely,

EVA H. LAURENCE.

Bewdley, Worcestershire.

September 12th.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have thirty-seven old numbers of "L'UMILE PIANTA" (from the first issue), which I want to sell, on account of being unable to house them. If you think any student would care to buy them, should you mind putting an advertisement in the magazine to that effect, please?—With best wishes, Yours sincerely,

FLORENCE MUCKLOW.

Kingwood, Peppard Common, Oxon.

September 29th, 1909.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have been asked to become the Editor of the *Children's Quarterly*, a little magazine which I think all ex-students of the "House of Education" probably know.